

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are currently pending. Claims 1, 5, 7, 10, 14, and 18 have been amended to improve readability.

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

In particular, the Examiner stated that the recitation "during automatic operation" is vague. Applicants respectfully submit that the term is clearly fully supported by the specification. As described on page 7, at paragraph 20, of the specification, for example, an operation in the task management application program can be configured to allow a computer terminal and a monitor device to operate automatically. As is also clearly described in the same section of the specification, such an automatic operation may include, for example, television recording from 2:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m., a virus scan, a backup, and the like. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-7, 10-14, and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 20030061526A1 (Hashimoto) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,894,580 (Yoshida).

Hashimoto is directed to a power saving method and device capable of dynamically selecting an appropriate power saving mode according to operation states of a computer system. According to Hashimoto, when a power saving system task detects that an execution queue does not contain any executable user task and the computer system has entered an idle state, a power saving transition check module checks if an event queue contains a timer-expiration-waiting event.

Yoshida is directed to controlling automatic turn-off time for a display unit, which is set to an off-timer as the residual capacity of a battery is changed. In particular, Yoshida discloses a display control method for battery-drivable electronic equipment having an automatic display-turn-off function in which a display is interrupted so as to save power if an input unit is not operated within an automatic display-turn-off time. In Yoshida, a change in the residual capacity of the battery is monitored, and the automatic display-turn-off time is changed when the residual capacity of the battery is changed. Yoshida also discloses that the equipment is automatically

turned off when the changed display-turn-off time has elapsed when the equipment is in a non-use state. According to Yoshida, the off-timer begins measuring the time when no input is performed by the operation of the user. When the measured time reaches the set time, a switch circuit is switched off so that the backlight of the display unit is turned off. In Yoshida, a relationship between a residual capacity of a battery and the level of the display brightness is defined, for instance. For example, if the residual capacity of the battery is 100% to 90%, the display brightness level is set to a level higher than when the residual capacity of the battery is 69% to 60%.

Yoshida also discloses an embodiment wherein the display control unit controls display brightness when a device is being operated and reduces the brightness level when the device is not being operated. See Yoshida, column 6, lines 6-9.

In the present invention, an input/output control section gives instruction(s) relating to electric power condition(s), for example, brightness of a monitor display, to an input/output device, for example, a monitor, during an automatic operation such as automatic recording of a movie while a user is asleep. The instruction(s) allow the monitor, for example, to reduce its brightness during automatic operation, regardless of whether the monitor is receiving a video signal from the computer, for example. As a result, the monitor's power consumption can be reduced, and the user's sleep session is not disturbed due to the monitor's reduced or non-existent brightness.

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 5, 7, 10, 14, and 18 are patentable over Hashimoto in view of Yoshida, as neither Hashimoto nor Yoshida, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests, "wherein said input/output control section gives instruction about said electric power condition to said input/output device during said automatic operation, regardless of whether input data from said input/output device or output data to said input/output device is transferred."

Applicants respectfully submit that in contrast to the present invention, Hashimoto is not concerned with automatic operation. Power saving in Hashimoto is related to when there is no user executable task and the computer system has entered an idle state, not when the computer is performing an automatic operation as in the present invention. See Hashimoto, Abstract.

Moreover, on page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner acknowledges that Hashimoto does not "show" performing power saving during automatic operation.

As Yoshida is concerned with automatically shutting off a device or reducing brightness when a device is not being operated and is not concerned with "automatic operation" as in the present invention, Yoshida does not add any relevant information to Hashimoto.

Further, in contrast to Yoshida, in the present invention, no monitoring of the residual battery is performed. Monitoring as to whether equipment is in use also does not occur in the present invention. The input/output control section provides instructions about the electric power condition to the input/output device, during the automatic operation, regardless of whether data is input to the input/output device or output from the input/output device.

That is, according to the present invention, when a TV programmed recording or automatic receiving of email has to be carried out during the automatic operation in which a user is absent from an information processing apparatus or computer, the power to the input/output device is cut in order to save the power. As a result, the display is in a power-saved mode when the equipment is not being used. However, the monitoring as to whether the equipment is being used is not carried out in the present invention.

In light of the foregoing, neither Hashimoto nor Yoshida, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the above-identified feature of the present invention. Therefore, independent claims 1, 5, 7, 10, 14, and 18 are patentable over the references. As dependent claims 2-4, 6, and 11-13 depend from respective independent claims, the dependent claims are patentable over the references for at least the reasons presented for the independent claims.

As Yasunobu is not concerned with automatic operation, Yasunobu adds no relevant information to the combination of references. Therefore, claims 8-9 and 15-16, via independent claims 7 and 14 respectively, are patentable over the references for at least the reasons presented above.

As Fujii is directed to a power-saving function for an audio amplifier in accordance with an unused state of each peripheral device for outputting an audio signal, Fujii is not concerned with automatic operation. Therefore, Fujii does not add any relevant information to the combination of references. Hence, claim 17, via independent claim 10, is patentable over the references.

If there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

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Respectfully submitted,

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